

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:WSSHEPARD/FDR

APPROVED BY EUR:JAARMITAGE

S/S:MR. MOFFAT

EUR/EE:CBROWN

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P 212008Z MAY 75 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST PRIORITY

USDEL SECRETARY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 118773 TOSEC 010160

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CVIS, HU

SUBJECT: MESTERHAZY

REF: (A) BUDAPEST 1483; (B) SECTO 1066

SECRETARY'S PARTY FOR SONNENFELDT AND HARTMAN

1. HUNGARIAN CHARGE KOVACS CALLED ON EE DEPUTY DIRECTOR BROWN MAY 20 TO EXPRESS HIS "PERSONAL" PLEASURE IN FAVORABLE GOH DECISION IN MESTERHAZY CASE. KOVACS SAID THAT DEPUTY MINISTER NAGY HAD EXPLAINED THE SITUATION FULLY AND THERE WAS NO REASON FOR HIM TO REPEAT THAT DISCUSSION. HOWEVER, HE HAD NOTED NAGY'S SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON STATE DEPARTMENT'S HANDLING OF CASE, WHICH HAD BEEN AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE DECISION."

2. BROWN REPLIED THAT WE WERE INDEED PLEASED TO RECEIVE THE NEWS FROM AMBASSADOR MCAULIFFE. CERTAINLY ALL DIRECTLY CONCERNED UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROBLEM BOTH FROM A HUMANITARIAN POINT OF VIEW AND FROM THE STANDPOINT OF OUR RELATIONS. LIKE IT OR NOT, THE CASE HAD BECOME AN
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INDEX OF OUR OVERALL RELATIONS.

3. BROWN STRESSED THAT WE HAD COMMON INTEREST IN AVOIDING UNDUE PUBLICITY FROM THIS DECISION. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE HAD NOTED NAGY'S VIEW THAT IT WAS "VERY IMPORTANT" THAT THE MESTERHAZY FAMILY HEAR ABOUT THE DECISION THROUGH CUSTOMARY CHANNELS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT PREFERENCE AND WILL CERTAINLY ABIDE BY IT. HOWEVER, THERE IS A POTENTIAL PROBLEM. IF THE SON HEARS THE NEWS FIRST AND CABLES HIS FATHER, THE FATHER MIGHT DO OR SAY SOMETHING INADVISABLE BEFORE GETTING IN TOUCH WITH US. TO HEAD OFF THIS POSSIBILITY, IT WOULD BE GOOD IF WE WERE INFORMED OF THE DECISION'S IMPLEMENTATION A FEW HOURS IN ADVANCE, EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR IN BUDAPEST. WE COULD THEN CALL THE FATHER, TELL HIM WE HAD REASON TO BELIEVE POSITIVE NEWS WAS FORTHCOMING AND STRESS THE NECESSITY FOR QUIET HANDLING.

4. KOVACS AGREED THAT THIS MADE SENSE. HE SAID HE WOULD TRY TO CONVINCE THE MFA TO EITHER TELL AMBASSADOR MCAULIFFE OR THE HUNGARIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, SO THAT EARLY NOTICE COULD BE GIVEN. BROWN REPEATED THAT WORD OF THE DECISION WOULD STILL COME FROM THE HUNGARIAN SIDE. WE WOULD, HOWEVER, BE POSITIVE SOUNDING ENOUGH SO THAT FATHER WOULD BE QUIET.

5. WITH FAVORABLE DECISION IN HAND, BROWN SAID WE WOULD ALSO DO ALL WE COULD TO AVOID COMPLYING WITH REQUEST OF SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE THAT WE TESTIFY ON CASE DURING JUNE 5 HEARINGS ON THE ROMANIAN TRADE AGREEMENT.

6. FOR HARTMAN: YOUR MESSAGE (REF B) RECEIVED. WILL DO. INGERSOLL

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